

That rate of responsible growth is what is needed to, in fact, maintain the solvency of the trust fund.

We also intend to offer choices and to restore the patient-physician relationship that has been lost by a large government, third-party payer system, which is going bankrupt unless we act now to save it.

I urge my colleagues on the other side and the White House, as well, to join us in the effort.

#### TAX BREAKS FOR WEALTHY IS WRONG PRIORITY

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are demanding an additional \$10 to \$30 billion in Medicare cuts. Why? Not to extend the life of the Medicare part A trust fund, not to improve the program for the 38 million seniors and disabled who depend on it. No, the additional cuts proposed by the majority are needed to fund tax breaks for the wealthy.

The new crown jewel, costing \$300 billion over the next 5 years, involves eliminating all estate and capital gains taxes. Some tax relief makes sense, but only after we balance the Federal budget and invest in our future.

Tax breaks for the wealthy are the wrong priority for this Congress. Our children must be our top priority. Children's health insurance, quality, affordable child care, improved education, and confronting drug and alcohol abuse, that is the heart of our future and ought to be part of our budget.

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#### REPUBLICAN AGENDA TO ADDRESS CHILD ABUSE

(Mr. EWING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, I come here today to talk about part of the Republican agenda. Yesterday I was in a news conference with the gentlewoman from New York [Ms. MOLINARI], the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY], and others from our side talking about legislation to help protect abused children.

One of the points that came out so clearly in that legislative proposal and those who testified was that drugs and alcohol are one of the biggest causes of child abuse in America. I think, of course, of child abuse as symptomatic of the problems with our society and that is an enormous challenge that will take years to meet. But there are things we can do now. We can stop drugs from entering America. We can do a better job of it. We can beef up our border patrols. I hope that they are

doing a good job. If they are not, we ought to be investigating. We can use the best equipment to detect those bringing drugs into America. We are not doing enough. It is time that we recognized how high these stakes are and do our very best.

#### FREEDOM OF THE PRESS UNDER ATTACK

(Mr. HINCHEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, one of the most important aspects of the foundation upon which this Republic is based is freedom of the press. That freedom unfortunately is under attack by the majority in this House. Two days ago, the Speaker of the House of Representatives addressing the Georgia Chamber of Commerce called upon the advertisers in America's newspapers to attempt to influence the quality and character of news as it is being recorded by the free press in this country. This comes upon the heels of the blatant attack during the last Congress to influence in an outrageous way public broadcasting, both television and radio, in this country by cutting back on their funds. Freedom of the press is critically important to the future of this country and to the freedoms that are possessed by all Americans. That freedom is under attack by this Speaker. I call upon the majority Members in this House to repudiate those remarks of the Speaker and to reaffirm that this House stands solidly behind the right of the free press in this country to report the news as it sees fit, not based upon the advertisers that advertise in those newspapers.

#### PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS

(Mr. FAWELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FAWELL. Mr. Speaker, the Clinton administration is expected to issue an Executive order regarding the use of what is called "project labor agreements" for all Federal and federally funded construction projects. This proposal is anticompetitive, it is discriminatory, and it is just basically unfair since nonunion construction companies will not be eligible to bid on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

The proposed order appears to be yet another attempt by the President to change or affect Federal laws by executive fiat rather than through the normal legislative process.

Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of basic American fairness. Republicans and Democrats alike should be concerned about this proposed Executive order. Bids to perform Government work should be based on sound, credible criteria such as quality of work, experience, and cost, not union affiliation and not whether the bidder is a union

or nonunion construction company. President Clinton's initiative is unfair and discriminatory and goes in the opposite direction of fair and merit-based competition. It will exacerbate already strained relations between management and labor in this Nation and between the Congress and the administration. I would implore the President to reconsider his intentions here.

#### MEDICARE

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, one of the things that most frustrates the American public is the failure of Congress to address the Nation's real business. Today the trustees of the Medicare system will make a report and talk about the real business, and that business is the problem of our Medicare trust fund going bankrupt in about the year 2002.

The question then becomes what are we going to do about it? Or, rather, what is the Republican majority going to do about it? We believe that we can make prudent cuts and achieve savings that will solve this problem. The President has put that proposal out on the table. We can adjust it and avoid this bankruptcy. The question becomes, what does the Republican majority want to do? So far, their crown jewel is not solving Medicare but providing tax breaks that basically benefit the wealthy. The tax breaks that they have talked about amount to \$300 billion over 5 years. Who gets that \$300 billion in tax breaks? Not the average American. Rather, the richest 5 percent, people who make over \$100,000 a year.

My suggestion is this: Let us not give those big tax breaks, let us put the crown jewel back in the drawer, let us address the Nation's real business which is solving the Medicare problem. We can do that without giving tax breaks to the wealthy, and that is what we ought to do. Take care of the Nation's business.

#### MEDICARE IS LIVING BEYOND ITS MEANS

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues have said so far this morning, today the Medicare trustees' report will be unveiled. Unfortunately, we all know what it is going to say. It is going to say that bankruptcy is closing in. That is the bad news.

For 2 years now Medicare part A, the trust fund, has been spending more than it takes in. Medicare is living beyond its means and is rapidly depleting any surplus that it may have built up. That is the bad news.

The good news is that we have a plan to protect the trust fund. We can simplify the complicated billing and paperwork. We can offer seniors a choice and